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2 December 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
THRU: AD/NE and DD/I
SUBJECT: Elaboration of remarks in IAC Meeting.

1. My facetious reference to the Harding Administration backfired badly but I was trying by the jest to get across three ideas which seem to me important:

a. Europeans—friends and foes—will, in fact, expect history to repeat itself, i.e., the Democrats were twice global minded; the Republicans after World War I rejected the League and passed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff, and they will act the same way now. That fallacious reasoning from history will affect Soviet and Western policy and action, and we must take account of it in our estimates.

b. Studies of "permanent" national characteristics have been a curse in our efforts to understand Germany during and after two wars. Geography and history do influence action, but there is about as much in common between Nicholas II and Stalin as there is between Harding and Eisenhower.

c. Kennan is a national asset whose talents would be wasted on research—which is not his strength. Could you draft him for the Board? It might set a precedent. In time a general or an admiral might come to regard service on the Board as the fitting climax to a career, like being commandant at the War College or the Academy. Is that a foolish dream?

2. Forgive the inept way in which I tried to get these ideas across.

Deputy Assistant Director
Office of National Estimates

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